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Union victory for Amazon workers

A turning point for labor?



SLL PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

ALU President Chris Smalls (right) at rally in Staten Island, N.Y., March 20.

By Sharon Black

The first crack in the Amazon empire is officially opened!

It came on April 1, when the Amazon Labor Union (ALU) won its election to represent the 8,000 warehouse workers at the JFK8 facility in Staten Island, New York.

We can't help but think that billion-dollar boss Jeff Bezos – whose racist anti-union attorney had earlier declared in a leaked memo that Chris Smalls, the young Black rank-and-file leader of ALU, to be “not smart or articulate” – woke up with a giant headache that day.

On the other hand, news of the victory elated workers everywhere.

It has given confidence to workers in Amazon warehouses and facilities across the country. Chris Smalls, interim Amazon Labor Union president, has stated that the ALU has already heard from 50 warehouses interested in organizing.

In Maryland, warehouse workers who have been building a committee made plans to launch the Maryland Amazon Workers Union, based on the example of the ALU. The group has been distributing flyers to workers at bus stops.

Bessemer, Alabama

The outcome of the BAmazon vote in Bessemer, Alabama has yet to be decided. But what is clear is that there was a dramatic gain for the union in this second election for union representation.

This time the difference is only 118 votes, 993 “against” to 875 “in

favor.” And there are 416 contested ballots. While there is a slim chance that the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) will win representation, it's not over yet.

Comparing Bessemer to Staten Island is like comparing apples and oranges. The Bessemer election took place in a “right to work” state (better known as a right to fire state).

Just 30 minutes away from the Bessemer warehouse, the mine workers from Warrior Met Coal have been on a strike now going into its second year. The mine workers have been heroically holding out in a battle that symbolizes not just 900 miners fighting for justice, but workers everywhere fighting against billion-dollar bosses who do not want to let go of even a crumb of their overblown profits.

Some of the miners have taken jobs at the Amazon warehouse and this tends to strengthen union consciousness. But there is contradictory pressure also. The fact that these workers have been fighting for so long, under dire economic conditions, compounds the fear Amazon bosses have spread.

In addition, the average wages in Alabama are far lower than Staten Island, which makes Amazon's pay look attractive.

But the pay does not mitigate the grueling conditions inside Amazon or the lack of power workers have without representation.

Some key lessons of Staten Island

Many of us who have been in the trenches looking for ways to organize will be evaluating what worked and what didn't at the Staten Island warehouse.

One clear fact that stands out is that the initiative and organizing was built by the workers themselves inside the warehouse.

Equally important is that the core organizers who took on this battle were representative of younger activists influenced by the Black Lives Matter movement. They spent time in the streets fighting police terror and other struggles against capitalism, including the development of mutual aid groups. Some of these workers consciously choose to take jobs at Amazon to help with organizing.

One thing that struck those of us from Baltimore who attended an ALU rally outside the Staten Island

Baltimore banner drop



By Struggle-La Lucha Baltimore bureau

During rush hour on March 25, anti-war protesters in Baltimore held a banner drop and street meeting to demand “No U.S.-NATO War on Russia & Donbass.”

Activists handed out fact sheets and Struggle-La Lucha newspapers to drivers at red lights. They reported many honks of support for the slogan on the banner.

SLL PHOTOS: SHARON BLACK

WAR CRISIS

- U.S./NATO peace? ²
- ‘Stop War Lies’ ³
- Voices from Donbass ⁴
- Lies about Bucha ⁵
- Ukrainians not mentioned ⁶
- ‘Revolutionary Marxists look below surface’ ⁶



PHOTO: UMWA

Some of the striking mine workers from Warrior Met Coal have taken jobs at the Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala.

- Minneapolis teachers ²
- The Malvinas War ⁷

facility on March 20 was the care that ALU organizers had for fellow workers, similar to many grassroots community groups and assemblies.

The Amazon Labor Union assisted and worried about workers faced with health and family crises, memorialized and marked the deaths of workers, and took on successfully fighting sexual harassment in the adjoining LDJ5 warehouse.

It is the example of this solidarity that is necessary to win struggles.

In terms of tactics, it is likely that there will not be a “one size fits

all” solution to organizing Amazon. Workers will have to experiment – win, lose, or draw – and embrace each other in solidarity. It is the goal of building working-class power that must remain front and center.

We are sure that debates and discussions will continue. Certainly what's considered the “mainstream” union movement will be important in the coming battles. Its resources and especially the members that they represent are incredibly important.

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Minneapolis teachers reach agreement on 18th day of strike

By FightBack News

Minneapolis, MN — Early on March 25, the striking Minneapolis teachers and education support professionals reached tentative agreements that will be voted on by union members. They have been on strike since March 8.

Over the almost three-week strike, the educators made major progress on several of their key demands. A big issue of the strike was improving the conditions of education support professionals (ESPs), who are largely oppressed nationality workers and make poverty wages.

Details of the final agreement have not yet been announced but in the previous “last, best and final offer” from the school district they had already moved the district up by thousands of dollars a year for the ESPs to around \$33,000 a year. The educators were holding the line for ESPs to reach a minimum of a \$35,000-a-year wage for ESPs at the bottom of the scale. While \$35,000 a year is still far too low according to the union, it would represent a life



Striking Minneapolis educators.

PHOTOS: BRAD SIGAL

changing increase for the ESPs at the bottom.

At the same time, the teachers had set 3% per year as a bottom line on across-the-board raises, with additional raises in the form of step increases. As of March 24, the school district was offering the teachers a package that would include 5% and 7% over a two-year contract with step increases factored in.

The educators also had demands for smaller class sizes with caps on maximum size, as well as increased mental health support for students.

More details on the tentative agreement are expected in coming days with a vote by the members soon to follow. If the vote passes, it will end the strike.

In the last week of the strike, community, student, parent and labor

support actions had ticked up to a higher level of intensity. Notably, a group of Minneapolis students began an occupation of the Davis Center, where Minneapolis Public Schools office is located, and they were still present on Friday morning as the tentative agreement was announced. The occupation included a community meal served by the students in the building on Thursday night.

Community support activity for the educators’ strike was high throughout and included many actions, protests, support events and marches in support of the educators. Support for the educators’ strike and their demands stayed high among community members and parents the whole way through.

The educators maintained strong picket lines throughout and over 95% of educators honored the strike for all 18 days. The educators appear stronger than ever before and ready to continue fighting for educators and students going forward.

Source: FightBack News

Will U.S./NATO militarization bring peace to Ukraine?

From the Emergency Campaign to Stop the War Lies street meeting in New York City’s Herald Square April 2.

By Lallan Schoenstein

When I woke up this morning, I thought about the protest today and I asked myself: Why are we engaged in another war?

Look at the recent withdrawal of the U.S. military from Afghanistan. Are the Afghani people better off after years of a war that plundered their economy? If the U.S occupation improved the lives of those people would the U.S. forces have been driven out?

Did the U.S. war in Afghanistan benefit us here? Only a very small percent benefited. The rich are richer and we are poorer than before.

The U.S. has one of the highest death rates in the world from COVID-19. That is no natural disaster. It is because the U.S., with all its wealth, does not provide for a national health care system.

Now the U.S. Congress has withdrawn funds for fighting COVID in order to spend another \$13.6 billion for the U.S. war machine in the Ukraine.

Inflation fueled by the U.S. war machine is cutting down our income. Prices of gas, food and rents are skyrocketing.

It is another U.S. war. The horrors on the evening news were conceived



SLL PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Lallan Schoenstein speaks at ‘Stop the War Lies’ action in New York, April 2.

in the Pentagon. Leon Pantetta, former head of the Pentagon and the CIA, has declared this a U.S. proxy war against Russia.

NATO is not a peacekeeping alliance. It is a war machine commanded by the Pentagon, spawned by the U.S. to threaten the Soviet Union during the Cold War. During the last

20 years NATO has expanded into most countries along the Russian border filling them with ever more lethal weapons.

The Russians have seen the U.S. and NATO invade Afghanistan and Iraq. They saw it demolish Libya and attempt the same operation in Syria. In Iraq alone, the war and the em-

bargo has killed about 2 million people including half a million children.

Will the U.S./NATO military funds bring peace to Ukraine — and improve our lives as well? NO! It is dragging the Ukrainians into catastrophe and threatening the well-being of the entire world.

Fight racism, not war! [📄](#)

‘Stop War Lies’ protest gets positive response in New York

By Struggle-La Lucha
New York bureau

On April 2, about two dozen activists gathered in New York City’s Herald Square shopping district for an action called “Stop the War Lies.” The protesters raised signs declaring “No war on Russia and Donbass,” “Stop supporting neo-nazis in Ukraine,” “Money for jobs and schools – not NATO,” and “Roll back gas and food prices.”

Given the overwhelming war propaganda broadcast by the White House, Congress and the media demonizing Russia’s intervention in Ukraine to aid the Donbass republics, no one was quite sure how it would be received.

The action was called by Solidarity with Donbass & Antifascists in Ukraine, the Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper.

Several anti-war organizations were invited, but declined to participate. However, individual activists who heard about the protest came.

Notably, none of these groups have called street actions in New York or other major cities since the Russian Federation recognized the independent Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics on Feb. 21 and the U.S.-NATO war propaganda reached full-throttle.

Over a mobile sound system, protesters chanted: “Stop the U.S. war machine from Ukraine to the Philippines” and “Hands off Russia, hands off Donbass, bring the troops home!” They distributed hundreds of fact-sheets and newspapers to passersby.

The reception was, significantly, overwhelmingly positive. People were eager to hear a different perspective from the war propaganda that has been drummed into their ears for months.

Many were openly skeptical of the U.S. government’s motivations for drawing the country into confrontation with Russia. Some even took up seats in the plaza where the event was held, including an Iraq War veteran with first-hand knowledge of U.S. war crimes.

Seeing Black and white people standing together to denounce the U.S. war lies encouraged many workers of color to stop and listen to the speakers and take informational leaflets.

Over the course of the nearly two-hour street meeting, several passersby, including parents with children, stopped to listen, hold signs and take selfies with the anti-war demands.

Get Pentagon off our backs!

Andre Powell of the Socialist Unity Party emceed the speak-out.

“This weekend marks the anniversary of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968,” Powell reminded the crowd. “Just one year before his death, Dr. King spoke out strongly against the Vietnam War. We have chosen this weekend to honor his memory and his stance against wars around the world, to raise our voices in support of the people of the Donbass region – the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics.



SLL PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

‘Stop the War Lies’ action in New York, April 2.

“U.S. corporations and banks don’t have the right to decide that the people of the Donbass region should not be independent of Ukraine. But since the Donbass region made its declaration, they have been continuously bombed by Ukraine. And you heard not one damn word in the U.S. media. None of them mention the eight years of killing in the Donbass region by the neo-Nazi Ukrainian government.

“Now they’re crying crocodile tears because Russia intervened at the request of the Donbass people for help. Russia did not invade; it intervened to protect the Donbass people who were being slaughtered by the Ukrainian government.”

“The U.S. has one of the highest death rates in the world from COVID-19,” said Lallan Schoenstein of Women in Struggle/Mujeres en Lucha. “That is no natural disaster. It is because the U.S., with all its wealth, does not provide for a national health care system. Now the U.S. Congress has withdrawn funds for fighting COVID in order to spend another \$13.6 billion for the U.S. war machine in the Ukraine.

“Will the U.S./NATO military funds bring peace to Ukraine — and improve our lives as well? No! It is dragging the Ukrainians into catastrophe and threatening the well-being of the entire world.”

Struggle-La Lucha reporter Bill Dores explained: “The media and the corporate flunkies on Capitol Hill and the White House want you to believe that one day Russia just up and attacked Ukraine. They don’t tell you that this war has been going on for eight years, since a CIA-led U.S.-backed coup in Ukraine in 2014. The Kiev regime has been waging war

against its own people, who don’t want to live under NATO, who want to live in peace with their neighbors.

“For the past 30 years we have watched the U.S. military destroy country after country – Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Yugoslavia – for no other reason than to enrich giant corporations, particularly the oil monopolies that want to control the world’s energy reserves. And now we’re supposed to believe the U.S. government is pouring weapons, money and advisers into Ukraine to support democracy.”

‘Can you afford a war for Big Oil?’

Sharon Black of the Unemployed Workers Union saluted the victory of the pro-union vote by Amazon workers in Staten Island. She declared: “It’s the billionaires like Jeff Bezos and the military industry that are benefitting from the war. When you go to your food market, can you afford food right now? Can you afford a war that’s being waged on behalf of the bankers and the oil industry? I don’t think so!

“This is part of a series of educational actions around the country to ‘Stop the War Lies.’ Because that’s what’s happening. When we go to fill our gas tanks and we can’t afford it, they want us to blame it on Russia instead of the oil oligarchs who live right here in this country. It’s their greed that’s responsible. No one has a gun to their head to raise prices. It’s capitalist greed, plain and simple. They created this disruption so they can increase their profits.

“As much as it hurts us here, it’s the people of eastern Ukraine, of the Donbass region, that are paying with their lives.”

Other speakers included Greg Butterfield, Solidarity with Donbass & Antifascists in Ukraine; Lee Patterson, Peoples Power Assembly; Heather Cottin, longtime teacher and activist; Andrew Mayton, Youth Against War & Racism; Johnnie Stevens, Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST); and Julius Kroll, one of a group of visiting University of Pennsylvania students who came upon the protest by chance.

Organizer Greg Butterfield told SLL, “Some groups have abandoned their professed anti-imperialist principles, condemning Russia and belittling the heroic resistance of the Donbass people, downplaying the role of neo-Nazi and white supremacist forces in the Ukrainian state, and giving backhanded support to the U.S.-NATO war drive. Others, while taking a better position on paper, are keeping their heads down, confining their opposition to statements and webinars.

“For us, the most important thing is to reach the working class and oppressed communities. We want to see what our class is feeling, and figure out the best ways to reach them with an anti-war message. That means getting out into the streets even at the risk of being confronted by right-wingers or even hostility from confused workers.

“Hopefully, the success of this initiative and the positive response will help the rank-and-file of the larger anti-war organizations push their leaders to be less timid and encourage more street actions. Visible, vocal opposition to the U.S. war drive, boldly exposing the lies it’s based on, is what is most urgently needed right now.”



The long shadow of the 1919 Chicago race riot

by Stephen Millies

SLL articles include: • Bombings greet the Great Migration • What did the unions do?

• Communists fight racism and evictions • Chicago Mayor Daley’s racist machine

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Available in a pamphlet form at tinyurl.com/1919chicago

Voices from Donbass speak to U.S. anti-war movement

By Struggle-La Lucha

On March 27, the Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper hosted a webinar called “Stop the War Lies: Voices from Donbass.” This was a unique opportunity for the U.S. anti-war movement to hear directly from people in the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics (DPR and LPR), whose voices are silenced by the Western mass media’s pro-Ukraine war propaganda.

A day before the event, organizers learned that the Zoom video conferencing service had suddenly blocked users in the DPR and LPR. Efforts to work around the ban through other services were unsuccessful, but thanks to pre-recorded messages from three speakers, the webinar was held successfully. The webinar was live streamed to Facebook and the full recording is available to watch at: [Youtu.be/d_cx_o6NblU](https://youtu.be/d_cx_o6NblU).

The webinar was chaired by John Parker, Socialist Unity Party candidate for U.S. Senate in California, and SLL co-editor Greg Butterfield. Messages of solidarity were delivered by Jacqueline Luqman of the Black Alliance for Peace and Carlos Martinez of the International Manifesto Group. Solidarity messages were also received from the Workers Voice Socialist Movement, Communist Workers League, International Action Center and others.

Special thanks to translators Jane Letova, a Donbass solidarity activist from Moscow, and Leonid Ilderkin, a leader of the Union of Political Refugees and Political Prisoners of Ukraine.

Following are transcripts of the speakers’ remarks.



Kristina Melnikova,
journalist in Donetsk

Melnikova has covered Ukraine’s war on Donbass for several years.

Heavy shelling of the Donetsk People’s Republic continues. There are wounded people every day among civilians. There are civilian deaths. I think it’s very important that you get to hear about this, because this is something that is not covered in Western media.

The most civilian casualties are happening in the territories that are being liberated from the Ukrainian military by the army of the Donetsk People’s Republic, such as Mariupol. But in spite of this, shelling of frontline cities and villages continues.

The biggest tragedy of the last few days, as you may have heard, is the rocket that fell in the center of Donetsk on March 14. There were over

20 killed and 30 wounded. There is a library next to the site and a lot of public transportation goes through there.

A few days later, another rocket hit a busy area of Donetsk at 8 a.m., the time people go to work. Four women were killed – workers in the market area who were going to their jobs that day.

One good thing is that, as more territories are liberated in the Donetsk People’s Republic, the less shelling and other attacks like this will happen.

I was recently in contact with refugees from Mariupol and Volnovakha. These people report about the cruelty of the Ukrainian military, such as at the hospital in Volnovakha, where two floors were occupied by the Ukrainian military, and patients and doctors were locked in the basement. They wouldn’t let them go – they were kept as hostages.

The Ukrainian army sees such situations as an opportunity for revenge against those who voted for independence from Ukraine in 2014. They’re trying to create as many civilian casualties as they can while they are being forced out by the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Militias.

The Ukrainian army uses tactics like putting its tanks in highly populated areas where there are buildings with many apartments. They are using the buildings and the people inside them as a human shield. This is a tactic they also used in 2014 and 2015 in Donetsk.



Alexey Albu,
political refugee in Lugansk

Albu is a coordinator of the Marxist organization Borotba (Struggle), banned in Ukraine. He is a survivor of the May 2, 2014, massacre at the Odessa House of Trade Unions.

I’m pleased to have the opportunity to speak to you, comrades.

In the Lugansk People’s Republic, life has changed a lot since the beginning of the joint military operation by Russia and the Donbass republics. The shelling of cities and towns has been stopped. Terrorist actions have been stopped.

I remember the days when the Ukrainian military was trying to place as many of their forces as possible near the LPR’s borders. And I also remember how, when that happened in January and February, the republic tried to bring it to the world’s attention that the Kiev re-

gime was bringing more and more forces and weapons to the frontline.

The situation reached the point where the army and nazi regiments like Azov Battalion brought their reserves of artillery shells, explosive devices and fuel for their military vehicles to the closest point to the LPR and Lugansk, the capital city. This was clearly preparation for a major assault. It was at this point that the people of the republic began to evacuate their families abroad, to safety.

By March 4, everyone who evacuated from the LPR could have returned safely. Life began to return to the LPR because the People’s Militia, with some help from the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, pushed back the nazis and nationalist forces of Kiev to a point where they could no longer shell the towns, cities and villages of the Lugansk region.

The situation in Donetsk is not as good, because there the Ukrainian forces are much stronger and larger in number, and they keep shelling the capital and surrounding cities.

There were terror attacks by Kiev in Donetsk with powerful missiles of great explosive capacity. For instance, the March 14 attack on central Donetsk that instantly killed 23 people in the street. Because of this type of attack by the Kiev regime, the LPR has temporarily closed schools as a precaution. Now the children are learning remotely. We hope this situation will soon be overcome as well.

Speaking about the achievements of the joint military operation, today the first stage has been achieved. The forces of the Kiev regime have been pushed back deeper into the country so they are not such a threat to the Lugansk and Donetsk People’s Republics, Russia and Belarus. They are now pushed back toward central Ukraine and westward. But in the Donetsk People’s Republic they are still present at several points in range to shell the city of Donetsk and other places like Gorlovka and Makeevka.

Another great achievement of the current operation in Ukraine is to secure the nuclear power stations. The biggest is the nuclear plant near Zaporozhye. Several of these nuclear power stations are now secured by the alliance of the Ukrainian opposition and Russian military. There are still a few in Western Ukraine. But the rest are very secure right now.

Another important accomplishment was to uncover biological research laboratories created by foreign powers in Ukraine. Some say they are of U.S. origin, others that they are British. And these biological laboratories, apparently for the creation of viral weapons, were discovered and documentation partially secured. There is evidence of what these laboratories did. There are about 15 of them throughout Ukraine. Some of them are already captured by the approaching forces of the Ukrainian opposition with the help of the Russian Federation.

Concerning casualties of this conflict: You see that the civil war has had a very cruel development. It’s

not a very pleasant situation with this ongoing civil war, including the current involvement of the Russian Federation. The scale of casualties is high. The Ukrainian army accounts for about 50,000 casualties, including many wounded. Most likely, it is less than this number for the advancing forces of the Ukrainian opposition, the People’s Republics and the Russian Federation. But we cannot count it exactly at this point.

Nevertheless, the tragedy is large-scale, as it was in other civil wars. For instance, the Spanish Civil War, when the republic tried to defend itself from the approaching fascist rebels, and failed. The situation for now is not finished on either side. In my native city, Odessa, I must admit the situation is not certain.

Long live the struggle against imperialism! No pasarán!



Katya A.,
activist in Donetsk

Katya A. is leader of the Aurora Women’s Club and a feminist, socialist and internationalist organizer.

I have been living in Donetsk for most of my life. I lived through almost the entire war and the economic blockade.

For more than a month we have been living in a phase of active escalation of the conflict. But I want to note that the escalation of the conflict to one degree or another took place through all eight years of the war. Since 2017, the intensity of shelling has gradually decreased, but people continued to die – from artillery shelling, mines and even from snipers. I’m talking about the civilian population of Donbass.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) report says that in the “territories not controlled by Ukraine” (LPR and DPR) since 2017, three times more civilians have suffered from the war than in the controlled ones. I do not take into account now the destruction of infrastructure, residential buildings and psychological harm.

According to official data, more than 1,600 residential buildings, more than 400 infrastructure facilities, including hospitals, schools, gas supply and water supply facilities,

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Refuting lies about ‘Bucha atrocities’

‘War of fakes’

The war of fakes is being escalated. Regarding the alleged atrocities in Bucha, Kiev region: The Russians left Bucha on March 30. On March 31, Bucha’s mayor reported that the town is free. On April 2 Ukrainian police and nationalist detachments entered Bucha and there were no dead bodies on the streets. On April 3 there appear pictures of dead bodies on its streets. Why exactly Bucha but not Hostomel, Irpen or Makariv – neighboring towns which the Russians also left? Because the name of Bucha resonates for English-speaking people with the term “butchery.”

Simultaneously the Russians receive messages about alleged Ukrainians’ atrocities. They are told via anonymous chats that exchanged Russian POWs were castrated and had their fingers cut off. The Russians especially checked the released former POWs – and tell that it’s a fake, nothing of that kind happened to former POWs. The messages are evidently distributed to inspire more anger. The purpose of the fakes – to cause more real atrocities from both sides.

Dmitri Kovalevich (Borotba), Kiev, Ukraine

Russia demands U.N. session over Bucha provocation

Russia on Monday will again demand the U.N. Security Council meet

in session to discuss the Ukrainian military’s provocation in Bucha, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on her Telegram channel.

“Yesterday, the current U.N.S.C. president, Britain, acting in accordance with its worst traditions, once again refused to give consent to holding a Security Council meeting on Bucha. Today, Russia will demand once again the U.N. Security Council meet in session to discuss criminal provocations by the Ukrainian military and radicals in that city,” Zakharova said.

The Russian Defense Ministry on April 3 dismissed the Kiev regime’s charges that its forces had allegedly killed civilians in the community of Bucha, the Kiev Region. The ministry recalled that Russian forces left Bucha on March 30 while faked evidence of alleged killings was presented four days later, when Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) agents arrived in the locality.

The Russian Defense Ministry also said that on March 31 Bucha’s Mayor Anatoly Fedoruk said in a video address that there were no Russian soldiers in the community. Nor did he mention any locals allegedly shot on the streets.

TASS Russian News Agency, April 4

‘Footage staged for Western media’

Russia’s Defense Ministry rejected allegations promulgated by Kiev,

claiming that Russian troops had killed civilians in the Ukrainian city of Bucha.

The ministry stated that the images and videos claiming to depict dead civilians on the streets of Bucha were staged photos and videos created specifically to distribute via the Western media, Sputnik reported.

“[These images are] yet another provocation. During the time this settlement was under the control of the Russian armed forces, not a single local resident was hurt [...] [This is] yet another example of providing staged material from the Kiev regime for the consumption of Western media, as it was the case with the Mariupol maternity hospital, not to mention other cities,” the ministry said.

The defense ministry stressed that Russian troops abandoned the city on March 30 and reminded the audience that the city’s mayor, Anatoly Fedoruk, confirmed this fact the next day. Furthermore, the mayor never mentioned in his video message March 31 that any civilians had been shot in the street with their hands tied, as claimed by Kiev.

During the whole time – right up until Sunday – that the city was under the control of Russian troops, residents of Bucha could move freely and had access to cell networks, the defense ministry stressed.

The ministry further noted that the images of the bodies on the streets emerged four days after the Russian troops left the city and immediately after the Ukrainian Security Service and the Ukrainian media arrived at the scene. The bodies which have been videoed and photographed show no signs of rigor mor-

tis or lividity, and the blood on the wounds is fresh.

Russian troops withdrew from Bucha after the last set of talks between Russia and Ukraine, during which Moscow announced a military de-escalation, which includes drastic reduction of military activities in the direction of Kiev. The Kremlin explained it was taking that step to ensure the safety of decision-makers in Kiev to expedite talks.

Fars News Agency, April 4

The Bucha provocation

The Bucha “Russian” atrocities propaganda onslaught may have worked well in the “west” but it lacks evidence that Russia had anything to do with it.

The former Indian ambassador [to the USSR] M.K. Bhadrakumar calls it an outright fake:

“An indignant Moscow has angrily demanded a United Nations Security Council meeting on Monday over the allegations of atrocities by Russian troops in areas around Kiev through the past month. Prima facie, this allegation is fake news but it can mold misperceptions by the time it gets exposed as disinformation. ...

“Even more surprising is that within minutes of the ‘breaking news,’ western leaders — heads of state, foreign ministers, former politicians — popped up with statements duly kept ready and only based on the videos, seconds-long videos and a clutch of photos, ready to pour accusations. No expert opinion was sought, no forensic work was done, no opportunity given to the accused to be heard.”

Moon of Alabama, April 4

Voices from Donbass

Continued from page 4

ties, have been damaged in the DPR since Feb. 17 this year. The threat of complete disconnection of the republic from the water supply is hanging over us. You can imagine what this means in a pandemic.

People in frontline areas especially suffer from this situation. For example, in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, the shelling is non-stop. In some areas, there’s been no water supply at all for a long time. This situation places a heavy burden on the shoulders of women, who still do most of the housework.

Our authorities have also been evacuating people since Feb. 17. But many people decided to stay. Many have elderly relatives who find it extremely difficult to make such trips. Some refused to go because they had already experienced the terrible phases of the 2014–2015 war. Some are afraid of the unstable refugee status.

We have no problems with food yet, but everything has significantly increased in price. And we are feeling the consequences of the sanctions policy. Important medicines are disappearing from sale.

The biggest problem is with the water supply. Otherwise, our workers are trying to fix breakdowns quickly. In February, one of the workers of the gas service was killed due to shelling when he and other colleagues came to repair the consequences of another shelling that happened about an hour earlier.

The people of Donbass need peace more than anything else in the

world. We’ve been talking about this for many years. A humanitarian catastrophe has developed in the newly liberated cities. People need the most basic things – food, clean water, medicines.

I think the socialists of the Western world should condemn the warmongers. It is necessary to prevent a full-scale NATO intervention in the war. It should be understood that all the weapons that are supplied to Ukraine are used, among other things, against the people of Donbass.

It is also necessary to consistently criticize the hypocritical sanctions policy. Such a policy harms the poorest segments of the population. In particular, people in the Donbass, against whom the Ukrainian state is waging war, suffer from sanctions.

We want to express our gratitude to all our comrades for their solidarity. We admire the struggle of the U.S. workers in the very center of global imperialism. Capitalism brings a lot of grief to the working class. But together we can overcome injustice and build a new world. 🇺🇸

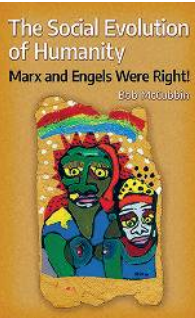
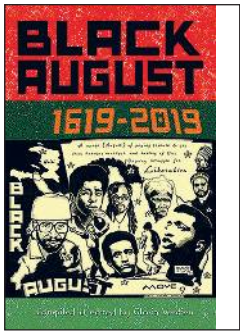
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BLACK AUGUST 1619-2019

commemorates 400 years of Black freedom struggle. This book examines the construction of a racial capitalist venture — slavery — where the histories of African, Native and working people overlapped.

Black August celebrates legacy and accomplishments of Black women. ▶ The book is dedicated to Black, Brown, oppressed, and poor people who have been imprisoned and killed by the U.S. criminal justice system.

Historical series by Matsemela-Ali Odom ▶ Contributions by Gloria Verdieu ▶ Carl Muhammad ▶ Zola Fish ▶ Mary Lou Finley ▶ Dennis Childs ▶ Eusi Kwayana ▶ Mumia Abu-Jamal ▶ Curtis Howard ▶ Poem by Sylvia Cameron Telafaro



Paperback or Kindle? <https://tinyurl.com/vwarcv7>

The Social Evolution of Humanity

Marx and Engels were right! by Bob McCubbin

This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the changing social status of women. It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels’ masterful work, *‘Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.’*

McCubbin is the author of ‘Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.’ Published in 1976, during the first flush of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin’s unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.



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East Coast office

2011 N. Charles St.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: **410.218.4835**

WEST COAST OFFICE

5278 W. Pico Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90019
Phone: **323.306.6240**

The Ukrainians that aren't mentioned

By Stephen Millies

The corporate media claim that all Ukrainians support President Zelensky, who has banned most political parties except his own and the far-right. These news outlets also whitewash the fascist gangs — integrated into the Ukrainian army — that engage in torture.

The sleazy London Daily Mail even mourned the death of Maksym Kagal, a member of the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion.

The real history of Ukraine includes a rich revolutionary tradition both in Europe and North America. Even the anti-communist “Encyclopedia of Ukraine” admits that 4.5 million Ukrainians were members of the Red Army that defeated Hitler.

Around 1.7 million Ukrainians earned medals for bravery. Over a million died in combat or were murdered in concentration camps.

One of the many sheroes was Lyudmila Pavlichenko, who was born near Kiev. She was the most successful woman sniper in history with 309 confirmed kills. Among them were 36 enemy snipers.

Pavlichenko was decorated as a Hero of the Soviet Union and made a tour of the United States. She spoke of how the Red Army was made of many nationalities on the basis of equality.

In contrast, the Jim Crow U.S. Army was so racist that even the blood supply was segregated. The folk singer Woody Guthrie wrote a song about Pavlichenko.

Oleksiy Federov was born in a Ukrainian peasant family. Federov was an outstanding leader of the partisan units that fought behind Nazi lines.

By 1943 Federov led 12 guerrilla groups that included 5,462 fighters. They engaged in 158 major battles



PHOTO: CANADIAN DIMENSION

From the film ‘The Ukrainian Labour Temple: A Cultural and Political Movement from Winnipeg’s North End’ (2012), directed by Aaron Floresco.

with the fascists, derailing 8,675 armored trains and blowing up 47 bridges.

Federov became a major-general and was one of only two partisan leaders to be awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union medal twice.

Another partisan leader who became a Hero of the Soviet Union was Pyotr Vershigora. He was a son of two Ukrainian teachers.

Ace fighter pilot Ivan Kozhedub shot down 62 Nazi aircraft. The son of Ukrainian parents, he was made a Hero of the Soviet Union three times.

Kozhedub became the first Soviet pilot to shoot down a Nazi Me-262 jet fighter. He later commanded a Soviet Air Division along the China-Korea border during the Korean War. The National Air Force University in Kharkov, Ukraine, is named after Kozhedub.

Millions of Ukrainians revere these anti-fascist heroes. They want to put a stop to the fascist gangs that worship Nazi collaborators like Stepan Bandera.

Bandera’s thugs helped the Nazis kill more than a million Jewish

Ukrainians as well as tens of thousands of Polish and Roma people. The current Ukrainian regime has allowed memorials to Bandera to be erected while statues commemorating the Red Army have been torn down.

Ukrainian miners vs. Mounties

Like other immigrants from the Tsarist empire, Ukrainians joined the labor movements in both Canada and the United States.

In the early 20th century, they founded meeting halls called labor temples. The Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg, Canada, still stands, though it was raided by police during the 1919 Winnipeg general strike.

Over its entrance are two clasping hands reaching across a globe with the slogan “Workers of the World Unite.” The pro-Soviet Ukrainian Labor News was published there weekly. (Manitoba Historical Society)

Another progressive Ukrainian publication was “Robitnytsia” (“The Working Woman”).

It was Ukrainian immigrants who

were the backbone of the communist movement in Western Canada. Jeff Kochan In “Canadian Dimension” (Jan. 3, 2020) describes some of their activities:

“In 1926, Ukrainian-Canadian leftists helped to elect Canada’s first communist politician, Winnipeg alderman William Kolisnyk. Ukrainian-Canadian communists served on Winnipeg’s council well into the 1930s, much to the alarm of the Ukrainian-Canadian right.

“Historian Orest Martynowych notes that when one Ukrainian-Canadian alderman urged the city to assist Jewish refugees, he was ferociously attacked in the right-wing Ukrainian-Canadian press. Ukrainian-Canadian leftists were denounced as the useful idiots of a ‘Judeo-Bolshevik’ plot.”


It’s the political descendants of these fascists who support the Azov Battalion and the Right Sector today.

Following the Bolshevik Revolution, the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA) founded 25 branches in Saskatchewan alone. (Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan)

This association supported the 1931 coal miners’ strike in Bienfait, Saskatchewan. The workers were organized by the Workers Unity League, which was led by Communist Party members.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police killed three of these strikers on Sept. 29, 1931, in nearby Estevan. The inscription “Murdered by RCMP” is on their tombstones. Many more workers were wounded or arrested.

The Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association was shut down by the Mounties in January 1940. The Association of United Ukrainian Canadians continues the ULFTA’s progressive work.

This is the real tradition of Ukrainian working people. 

‘Revolutionary Marxists look below surface’ to understand war crisis

Presentation by Struggle-La Lucha co-editor Greg Butterfield on behalf of the Socialist Unity Party at the international online forum “Marxists Speak Out on the Conflict Between Russia and Imperialism” on March 26. The event featured representatives of communist and socialist organizations based in Argentina, Australia, Britain, Greece, South Korea, Turkey, the U.S. and more.

By Greg Butterfield

I want to thank the organizers for inviting us to participate in this important event.

There are turning points in history where the principles of organizations and individuals are tested and clarified. This is one of those moments. In the past month we have seen so many anti-war and left formations bow to the intense pressure of imperialist propaganda at the expense of anti-imperialism and the interests of the workers and oppressed.

The other side is that the war crisis is separating the wheat from the chaff. Leaders and organizations that have coasted through recent years on past accomplishments are now forced to show where they really stand. At the same time, groups separated by historical differences and secondary issues may now find a new basis to work together and learn from each other.

The Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper call for the victory of the Donbass republics and Russia in their defensive joint military operation to denazify and demilitarize Ukraine. What this really means is: to end the eight-year genocidal war against the people of Donbass; to remove the neo-Nazi bootheel from the neck of the Ukrainian people; to reverse Ukraine’s transformation into a NATO war base that poses a threat to Russia; and return it to the formally neutral status before the U.S.-backed coup of 2014.

We call for the defeat of U.S. imperialism, which instigated this war and is a combatant as surely as it is in Yemen or anywhere else Washington’s proxy wars are carried out. After this week’s NATO summit, the imperialists are moving closer to direct intervention, which could precipitate an unprecedented global war.

We believe it is very important to elevate the struggle of the people of the Donbass region, the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics. Too often their struggle is ignored by the left or, following the lead of the corporate media, written off merely as “Russian separatists” or “Putin’s proxies.” Such a view can only be argued by people who are completely ignorant of the Donbass and the anti-fascist struggle of the people there for the last eight years, or by those who know better but are adapting their views to the needs of imperialism.

The people of Donbass have resisted through eight years of con-

stant terror by the Ukrainian Armed Forces and neo-Nazi battalions, and a blockade that has deprived the people of food, medicine and the essentials needed for the maintenance of basic industry. This resistance draws upon the deep traditions of internationalism and anti-fascism of the Soviet people and it found an echo among people in Russia.

Marxist view of Russia’s contradictions

Revolutionary Marxists look below the surface to understand the class forces and contradictions at work. Those who focus on President Vladimir Putin’s and Russian capitalists’ reactionary ideology ignore the dialectical relationship between Russia’s struggle to maintain its sovereignty against the U.S. and NATO, and the anti-fascist struggle in Donbass and Ukraine.

The same dynamic exists on a global scale. Looking at it purely on

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Malvinas War: a challenge to imperialism

By Scott Scheffer

This week the people of Argentina are commemorating the 40th anniversary of the April 2, 1982, war to take back the Malvinas archipelago from imperialist Britain. In the English-speaking world, the imperialist media usually calls this Britain's "Falklands War."

Six hundred forty-nine Argentine soldiers lost their lives and ultimately the British military held onto their colonialist-era possession of the islands. Yet the military campaign — being a fight against imperialism — is a great point of pride for the people of Argentina.

Argentina's military sank the HMS Sheffield and damaged other British warships with Exocet missiles that were sold to them by imperialist France. Anti-imperialist demonstrators filled the streets of Buenos Aires, calling for victory over Britain.

The fact that Argentina was ruled by a repressive, right-wing military junta didn't hinder the masses' support for anti-imperialist action at all.

In fact, the momentum of the anti-imperialist struggle fueled a desire for justice that burned in the hearts of Argentine people. The war to take back the Malvinas ignited a resurgent people's movement that ended the junta's rule over Argentina within months.

Possession of the Malvinas had been contested between Spain, France and Britain in the 18th century. The islands could serve as a naval asset — valuable in the colonial mission of dominating South America.

After winning independence from Spain, the flag of Argentina was hoisted on the Malvinas in 1820, but Britain invaded and stole the archipelago in 1833 and held it for nearly 150 years.



Argentine soldiers place a mortar during the Malvinas War between Argentina and Britain, which lasted from April 2 to June 14, 1982.

By April 1982, negotiations for possession of the islands had yielded nothing. The junta's long hold on Argentina's government was shaky. Runaway inflation and working-class anger against bloody repression led them to launch an invasion to take back the Malvinas as a distraction.

The fact that the war was launched by the Argentine side, and that it was launched by a right-wing government, confused much of the U.S. anti-war movement. The limitations of pacifism prevented them from looking at the world situation in the context of the imperialist epoch. Moreover, the hated Reagan admin-

istration initially sided with the Argentine junta and that muddled the waters even more.

Imperialist secret diplomacy

In a 1990 article written during the leadup to the U.S. attack on Iraq, Marxist-Leninist leader Sam Marcy used the example of the Malvinas War to try to strengthen the movement's understanding of imperialism. He described a moment in the early days of the war when the fog lifted and the relationship between imperialist countries and against all challengers to imperialism was illuminated.

Marcy wrote: "When the Argentine military decided to take the plunge and retake the islands, this greatly upset the reactionary Thatcher regime in Britain, which decided to militarily challenge the Argentine takeover.

"This in turn upset General Alexander Haig, who at that time was secretary of state under the Reagan administration. They had such a chummy relationship with the Argentine fascist military that they forgot the secret agreement the U.S. had with Britain over the Malvinas.

"When Haig was called to London, Thatcher virtually read the riot act to him. She recalled to him the specific secret agreement: that when the British needed military support in the North or South Atlantic, and especially those islands, the U.S. was obligated to give not only the necessary intelligence, but also air reconnaissance, satellite photos and other material assistance as needed.

"Haig's efforts to persuade Thatcher not to challenge the Argentine military were thwarted when she threatened to break up the agreement altogether, unless Washington supported Britain and lived up to the secret agreement. The Reagan administration, seeing the better part of wisdom, lined up quickly with the Thatcher government against the Argentine military in

order to save the alliance, which was far more important to them."

The imperialist powers side with each other to this day to defend their respective "spheres of influence." The fact that they each fight for their own interests at times doesn't shake their alliance.

The U.S., the European imperialist powers and Japan have the world divided up amongst them. The clear example of how they guard their world dominance is that capitalist Russia, over more than three decades, has been unable to reach a stage in its economic development when it exports capital — a feature of the imperialist state of capitalism.

At this point in history, even capitalist countries have to either be an appendage or a proxy of imperialism or they will be starved and punished. The U.S. is the preeminent imperialist power and has a military far greater than all the others combined. Even when it goes against the short-term interests of other powerful imperialist countries, they're pressured in one way or another by the U.S. to ratchet up the pressure against targeted countries.

Today, U.S.-led NATO is the most prominent expression of this circumstance. The confusion over Russia's operation in Ukraine, and of Russia's defense of the people of the Donbass region, is similar to the U.S. movement's reaction to Argentina's war against imperialist Britain.

The political character of the military junta didn't matter to the people of Argentina. They cheered the war as a rebellion against imperialism and dealt a death blow to the junta afterward.

Russia is not led by a fascist military, but in any case, Putin's character, or the nature of the Russian state, are not the question today. NATO's expansion strengthens imperialism — U.S. imperialism in particular — and the abolition of NATO should be the rallying cry of the U.S. anti-war movement. 📌

Marxists look below surface

Continued from page 6

the surface level of Putin's domestic pronouncements, you could come to the conclusion that there's little difference from Bolsanro in Brazil or Modi in India, whose ruling classes are fundamentally subservient to the U.S. But the life-and-death struggle of Russia to not be dissected and swallowed by Western imperialism has pushed it into the camp of countries and movements resisting U.S. imperialism, including Venezuela, Cuba, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Zimbabwe, Syria, Yemen and Iran.

With our modest forces and resources, we are doing what we can to clarify the issues and bring a genuine anti-war position to the working class. We have launched a campaign called "Stop the War Lies," aimed at exposing the U.S.-NATO role in Ukraine and imperialism's cozy relationship with Ukrainian fascists, educating about the cause of Donbass, and explaining how Wall Street, Big Oil and the military industry profit from the war at the

expense of people here.

We and allied groups have been getting out into communities with fact sheets, holding picket lines and speak-outs. Last night, our comrades in Baltimore held a rush hour banner drop and leafleting action. Today folks in New Orleans and San Diego are doing community outreach. Next weekend, on April 2, we are building protests in New York and Los Angeles.

On March 27, we will hold a webinar featuring speakers from the Donbass republics, to help inform the anti-war movement and the left about the reality of the U.S.-Ukraine war.

We invite the organizations here to join this effort. We are open to collaborating with groups here in the U.S. and internationally. This is the moment to overcome secondary differences and build a united front against imperialism and war that can lay the foundation for future revolutionary struggles.

Victory to the Donbass republics and their allies! U.S.-NATO out of Ukraine! 📌

Ante un gobierno criminal y fallido, un pueblo se levanta y lidera

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

La sustitución y el desplazamiento del pueblo boricua ha tomado un ritmo sumamente acelerado, particularmente luego de la destrucción que causaron los huracanes Irma y luego María, en el año 2017. Para entonces, ya hacía 5 años – en el 2012 – que se habían implantado las nefastas Leyes de incentivos fiscales 20 y 22. Las que yo llamaría Leyes de Paraíso Fiscal que han atraído cientos de millonarios extranjeros. Pero lo que supuestamente iba a ser una inversión para la economía en Puerto Rico, ha demostrado que su verdadero propósito era el de terminar – más bien exterminar – la población isleña y hacer de Puerto Rico un centro de vacaciones y residencias para millonarios.



Han estado comprando las mejores tierras en las costas y montañas, sacando residentes de viviendas de interés social para convertirlas en habitaciones de arrendamiento corto. Han destruido los mangles y los corales en las costas, rellenando con cemento y poniendo en riesgo las

comunidades aledañas al ser más susceptibles de ser arrasadas por marejadas y tsunamis. Y todo con el aval del gobierno y sus agencias. Pero ante este gobierno fallido, hay un pueblo que no cesa de luchar en defensa de nuestra tierra, exponiendo estos crímenes constante-

mente por las redes sociales y en manifestaciones. Y esto quedó demostrado esta semana cuando por fin, después de que expusieran públicamente los crímenes contra la costa sur en una Reserva Natural en Salinas, el Tribunal de Justicia ha hecho acusaciones de crimen ambiental contra agencias del gobierno, lo que ha hecho renunciar al titular del Departamento de Recursos Naturales. Ante un gobierno criminal y fallido, un pueblo se levanta y lidera. Y así seguimos hasta que logremos la independencia y nuestra soberanía.



Desde Puerto Rico, para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.

Union victory for Amazon workers: A turning point for labor?

SLL PHOTOS: SHARON BLACK

Continued from page 1

But it cannot and will not be the ultimate answer. The dynamic force of younger, more militant workers, who reject capitalism and worn-out models, and the engagement of the rank and file, will have to play the key role in reviving class struggle in this country.

Will this mark a new stage of the labor movement?

We believe it will. The pandemic has laid bare the deep and undeniable problems of capitalism. Bezos and his class of billionaire bosses and bankers have scored a windfall of profits on the backs of workers. These are the con-

ditions that are propelling struggle. We cannot forget that the Staten Island victory actually began with the walk-out of Amazon workers, led by Chris Smalls, against the callous disregard of the company for the health and well-being of workers during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. This stunning fightback proves that the huge multinational, multi-gendered, multi-generation, multi-abled working class is just beginning to be heard, both in the workplace and the community. Everyone's task is to join in and strengthen this movement. Sharon Black is a former Amazon worker and author of the pamphlet "Amazon Worker Tells All," available free to download.



Amazon workers' rally in Staten Island, N.Y., March 20.

Alabama Amazon workers RESPECT right to a union! HAZARD PAY FOR ALL ESSENTIAL WORKERS

Amazon Worker TELLS ALL Sharon Black

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